As a result of the tragic shootings of recent years, many schools and communities have turned to student profiling in an effort to identify, at an early stage, those students who are most likely to initiate such violent acts. Profiling attempts to identify students likely to be violent based on traits, characteristics, and/or behavior (e.g., detachment from school, unusual interest in sensational violence, turbulent relationships with parents). Despite research, including that performed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the United States Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center, student profiling has been unable to identify traits and characteristics that can reliably distinguish violent students from other students.

**NASSP GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Student profiling unfairly labels many nonviolent students as potentially dangerous and misidentifies other “safe” students who may actually commit a violent act.
- Current profiling techniques lack the specificity needed to be effective.
The over-identification and misidentification of potentially violent students can result in a school atmosphere that is overly fearful, distrustful, and not conducive to teaching and learning.

Due to the high level of inaccuracy, profiling runs the risk of stigmatizing and stereotyping students and endangering their civil rights, especially the rights of those students who are viewed as more “different” than “normal.”

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Refrain from using student profiling as a means of identifying potentially violent students.

- In lieu of student profiling, NASSP recommends following the recommendations put forth in its Safe Schools position statement (adopted February 3, 2000) and Weapons in Schools position statement (adopted May 5, 2001).